

## Howard Behar

Former President of Starbucks North America and Starbucks International

Howard Behar is the former president of Starbucks North America and Starbucks International. He joined the company in 1989 when the company had just begun to venture outside the Northwest region. Initially serving as vice president of sales and operations, he grew the retail business from 28 stores to more than 400 stores by the time he was named president of Starbucks Coffee International in 1995.

Under Behar's leadership, Starbucks opened its first location in Tokyo in 1996. Following this historic opening, over the next three years he introduced the Starbucks brand across Asia and the United Kingdom. After a two-year hiatus, he returned to Starbucks as president of Starbucks North America until his retirement in January 2003. He was a director of the company from 1996 to 2008 and served as an advisor and coach at all levels. Since his retirement, Behar has written a book *It's Not About the Coffee* that describe his leadership principles.

A frequent speaker on the topics of organizational and personal leadership, Behar serves on several profit and nonprofit boards, including Anna's Linens, Sterling Savings Bank, Education Elements, and the advisory boards of Anthos Capital and Roadtrip Nation. His non-profit commitments are to the University of Washington Foundation, Global Compassion Council, and the Biller Family Foundation. He is sponsoring a joint educational initiative with the University of Washington School of Social Work and the Business School. He also served as the Fritsky Leadership Chair 2008–2009 at the UW's Foster School of Business. He has also moved into the furniture business. His sense of the customers as people, his concern for their needs, and his experience of being a part of people's dreams for their homes and their lives helped him make the next successive moves in his retail career.